

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 SAIGON 07943 071019 Z

15

ACTION EA-14

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 IO-12 AID-20 OMB-01 EUR-25 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03

RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12 RSR-01 DPW-01 /141 W

----- 122826

P R 080836 Z MAY 73

FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 1270

USDEL JEC PARIS

C O N F I D E N T I A L SAIGON 7943

E. O. 11652: N/ A

TAGS: PINT PINS MILI VS

SUBJECT: MR I CEASEFIRE AND POLITICAL WEEKLY OVERVIEW FOR PERIOD
APRIL 29 - MAY 5 1973

THE FOLLOWING TELEGRAM FROM AMCONSUL DANANG DATED MAY 5
IS REPEATED HERE FOR YOUR ACTION/ INFO:
C O N F I D E N T I A L DANANG 493

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, VS

SUBJ: MR I CEASEFIRE AND POLITICAL WEEKLY OVERVIEW FOR
PERIOD APRIL 29 - MAY 5, 1973

BEGIN SUMMARY: MILITARY ACTIVITY DROPPED EVEN BELOW THE PAST
LOW- LEVELS OF ACTIVITY. ACTION REMAINED HEAVIEST IN THE 1 ST
DIVISION AREA WEST OF HUE. RF MORALE PROBLEMS WERE NOTED IN
QUANG TRI AND QUANG NGAI PROVINCES. THE HIGHLIGHT OF THE
WEEK OCCURRED ON MAY 5 WHEN AIR AMERICA AND THE ICCS FINALLY
SUCCEEDED IN REMOVING THE REMAINS OF HELICOPTER #115 TO THE
SOUTH BANK OF THE THACH HAN RIVER IN QUANG TRI. OBO SMALL
CIVILIAN DETAINEE RELEASES OCCURRED IN QUANG TRI AND QUANG
NAM; HOWEVER, A RELEASE SCHEDULED IN QUANG NGAI FAILED DUE
TO LACK OF PRG ASSURANCE OF ICCS SAFETY. POLITICAL ACTIVITY
REMAINED ALMOST MOTIONLESS. IN SEVERAL PROVINCES AUTHORITIES,
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PAGE 02 SAIGON 07943 071019 Z

CONCERNED AT DEMOCRACY PARTY WEAKNESS, HAVE OFFERED ACCOMMODATIONS WITH LOCAL LEADERS FROM OTHER PARTIES. END SUMMARY.

1. MILITARY SITUATION:

A. THE LEVEL OF INCIDENTS WAS APPRECIABLY LOWER COMPARED TO THE LAST FEW WEEKS, AVERAGING LESS THAN TWENTY INCIDENTS PER DAY AS OPPOSED TO A RATE IN THE HIGH TWENTIES. ACTION WAS, AS USUAL, HEAVIEST IN THE 1 ST DIVISION AO WEST OF HUE, BUT EVEN IN THIS SECTOR CONSISTED LARGELY OF ATTACKS BY FIRE AND MINOR ENGAGEMENTS. THE COMMUNIST BUILD- UP OF THE WESTERN PART OF MR I CONTINUED, WITH ROAD CONSTRUCTION NOTED ESPECIALLY IN QUANG NGAI.

B. QUANG NGAI REPORTED DURING THE WEEK THAT A MORALE PROBLEM HAD DEVELOPED IN ONE REGIONAL FORCE BATTALION WHICH HAS BEEN ENGAGED IN CONTINUAL, ALTHOUGH MINOR ACTION ON THE BATANGAN PENINSULA OVER THE PAST SEVERAL WEEKS. A POTENTIAL MORALE PROBLEM WAS ALSO NOTED FOR THE FIVE RF BATTALIONS CURRENTLY ASSIGNED TO THE QUANG TRI FRONT UNDER THE OPERATIONAL COMMAND OF THE VIETNAMESE MARINES. SUBSTANTIAL NUMBERS OF THESE RF TROOPS HAVE RELATIVES NORTH OF THE THACH HAN RIVER; THE COMMUNISTS ARE AWARE OF THIS AND HAVE EXPLOITED IT IN LOUDSPEAKER PROPAGANDA CAMPAIGNS. DESPITE THESE SPECIFIC REPORTS, THERE DOES NOT APPEAR TO BE ANY GENERAL DETORIORATION OF RF MORALE. I CORPS RF/ PF DIVISION RATES THE FIFTY RF BATTALIONS IN MR I AS FOLLOWS: EXCELLENT, 16; AVERAGE, 25; POOR, 9.

2. ICCS HELICOPTER RECOVERY:

AFTER LONG DELAYS AIR AMERICAN TECHNICIANS FINALLY DISASSEMBLED AND REMOVED HELICOPTER NO. 115 FROM THE CRASH SITE IN WESTERN QUANG TRI. ALTHOUGH THE ORIGINAL INTENT HAD BEEN TO STRIP THE AIRCRAFT OF HIGH VALUE PARTS AND VALUE THE FRAME THE PRG INSISTED THAT THE ENTIRE AIRCRAFT BE REMOVED. THE PARTS ARRIVED AT GIO LINH IN THE EVENING OF MAY 1 WITH THE EXPECTATION THAT THE PARTS WOULD BE TRUCED TO THE THACH HAN RIVER AND FROM THERE HELILIFTED ACROSS THE RIVER THE NEXT DAY. HOWEVER WHEN THE HELICOPTERS CROSSED THE RIVER ON MAY 2 THEY WERE FIRED UPON BY PRG TROOPS WHO LATER CLAIMED THEY WERE FIRING ON AN UNIDENTIFIED HIGH ALTITUDE " INTRUDER".

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PAGE 03 SAIGON 07943 071019 Z

FINALLY ON MAY 5 TWO ICCS HELICOPTERS SUCCEEDED IN FERRYING THE REMAINS TO THE SOUTH BANK OF THE THACH HAN RIVER THUS ENDING THE SAGA OF CHOPPER NO 115.

3. PRISONER EXCHANGES:

A RELEASE OF 28 PRISONERS TOOK PLACE ON QUANG TRI ON APRIL 30. THERE WAS ALSO A SMALL RELEASE OF 6 CIVILIANS BY THE PRG IN

QUANG NAM PROVINCE ON MAY 2. HOWEVER AN INTENDED RELEASE OF CIVILIAN DETAINEES SCHEDULED FOR MAY 2 IN QUANG NGAI FAILED TO TAKE PLACE BECAUSE THE ICCS DID NOT RECEIVE A GUARANTEE OF SAFETY FOR ICCS HELICOPTERS AND PERSONNEL FROM THE PRG.

4. GVN POLITICAL:

PREPARATION FOR VILLAGE ELECTIONS ROLL MECHANICALLY ON BUT THE PROVINCE AUTHORITIES IN MR 1 APPEAR CONCERNED THAT THE DEMOCRACY PARTY (DP) IS STILL TOO WEAK IN ORGANIZATION AND VOTER APPEAL. DP ORGANIZERS HAVE THEREFORE TRIED TO FIT THEIR MARCHING READERS INTO THE REALITIES OF THE LOCAL SITUATION. THEY HAVE OFFERED " LOCAL ACCOMMODATION" WHEREBY WAGE LEADERS OF STRONGER TRADITIONAL PARTIES MIGHT PARTICIPATE " EN BLOC" WITH THE DP, AS IN QUANG NGAI, OR UNDER THE POPULAR FRONT FOR PEACE LABEL AS IN THUA THIEN. IT IS NOT YET CLEAR WHETHER SUCH LOOSE COOPERATION WILL IN FACT BE CARRIED OUT. THE AUTHORITIES IN QUANG TIN AND QUANG NGAI HAVE POSTPONED ELECTIONS TO GIVE DP ORGANIZERS MORE TIME TO WORK.
THOMSEN.
UNQUOTE.
BUNKER

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NMAFVVZCZ

*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a
*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL
@@@OASYS@@@<CONCATENATED>

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*** Current Handling Restrictions *** n/a

*** Current Classification *** CONFIDENTIAL

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: <CONCATENATED>
Draft Date: 08 MAY 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: hilburpw
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973SAIGON07943
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GDS
Errors: n/a
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From: SAIGON
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
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Original Previous Classification: n/a
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Page Count: 6
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: hilburpw
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags: ANOMALY
Review Date: 06 DEC 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <06-Dec-2001 by thigpegh>; APPROVED <14-Dec-2001 by hilburpw>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: <DBA CORRECTED> mcm 971223
Subject: MR I CEASEFIRE AND POLITICAL WEEKLY OVERVIEW FOR PERIOD
TAGS: PINS, VS, MILI, PINT
To: EA
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005